

THE “*CONDER*” TOKEN

COLLECTOR’S JOURNAL

THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE CONDER TOKEN COLLECTOR’S CLUB

Volume XIX Number 1 Spring 2014 Consecutive Issue #67



Anglesey 425, 426



Middlesex 700, 896



Middlesex 703, 897



Middlesex 704, 898



Middlesex 707



Middlesex 708

Six dies in question

The 50 Dies of Thomas Spence

Devon *2bis*?

Discovery of two new Devon dies

Bankruptcy in the 1790’s

Token Issuers in Financial Distress – Part 2

What’s bis?

“BIS” Demystified

Robinson, Mooney, and Carter

Seeking the Issuers of the Hamps 58

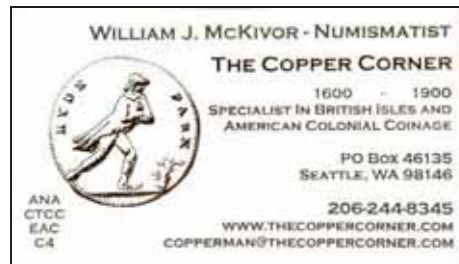
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Please check your mailing label before you throw it out!

It contains extra information – such as when your dues are paid through. This information will appear as: Jon Lusk Mem # 137 Exp 3Q2014

This tells me my dues are paid up until the third quarter of this year. Don't miss an issue by having your dues lapse.

On the Cover are photographs representing the six dies mentioned in Harry Salyards article on Spence dies. These pictures are courtesy of Gary Sriro and his photo DVD.

* * * * *

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It is time for elections. Those of us with offices in this club welcome, believe me, anyone who would participate in running it. We understand that there are many who just do not have the time, and that applies to everyone, myself included, but it is good to take an active part. Therefore, we called for nominations for club officers in the last Journal, and the response was underwhelming.

SO---PLEASE TAKE A FEW MINUTE AND SEND ALONG YOUR NOMINATION FOR PRESIDENT, VICE PRESIDENTS (TWO, USA, AND THE REST OF THE WORLD), TREASURER, AND BOARD MEMBERS. It would be nice if you volunteered, but if you wish you can nominate someone else, who will not be on the ballot unless they agree to be there. This

issue is thus a final call for nominations, and the ballot will be in the next Journal, with the winners taking office January of 2015. It is your club; please do what you can to make it better.

I want to thank our US Vice President, Editor, and jack of all trades for all the work he puts in. It is much appreciated by everyone. Thanks, Jon.

The Journal --- doing only three issues a year has helped some, but we still come up short when it comes down to articles to put in it. I know this seems like there is a broken record someplace, but we do need our members to write a bit for the journal. If you have anything you would like to share, please do so. We would love to have a backlog of articles, not be scrambling every issue.

Having only three issues also helped us to keep our dues to what they were originally in 1996, which is quite a feat. I think we are the only national club to have held the line in such a way. Quite a few people are opting for the color version of the Journal, in the USA it is another \$10 per year, but the presentation of the color version is impressive. A good number of our members in the UK have gone to color too. Discerning folks there. Dues, however, due to heavily raised postal rates, and the plans to raise them further internationally, will probably mean a bit of a raise at least for our UK members.

We were to have some of the back issues of the Journal available on the web site, but it has not happened, for the usual reasons, time consuming jobs often clash with other time consuming jobs, and people often opt for the one that pays money. Sad, but true. If you have the expertise and the time to help us with the web site, volunteers are needed.

Coming up: The next general meeting of the club, ably run by Jon Lusk, will be in Rosemont at the summer ANA. **Baldwin's** will have an auction of tokens, most likely the 30th of September according to last reports, and **DNW** will have their auction the next day, 1 October. Both will be available on line as well as in person. I am hoping to attend both of them.

The new edition of D&H will be held back a few weeks for inclusion of more token changes in the addenda, a large number of them will be coming in September, and they might as well be in there. Look for the book around the first of the year. Also, Jon Lusk's new book on genuine trade pieces is at the printer now, and will be ready this summer. It completely outdates and outpaces the Bell Commercial Tokens book, it will be a must have for everyone!! Take my word for it!!

Happy Collecting, Bill McKivor



(Editor's note: The following article was submitted to be published almost 20 years ago. It was not printed. When Bill Noyes, the foremost author on US large cents, heard that I was about to publish a new book similar to Bell's *Commercial Coins* book he offered it again. He felt that the reason that it was not used then was that the powers-to-be wanted a balancing article. When that article wasn't forthcoming they didn't publish his. He left our organization because of the suppression of his piece. Please read it as a 20 year old article as no attempt has been made to revise it to reflect things that have changed since it was written. I know that it is opinionated and provocative, and that everyone may find points with which they disagree. It is published here to promote debate, and to cause the readers to question and perhaps strengthen their own views of their collecting world. Better yet, why don't you write a similar article stating your own views?)

A Few Unorganized Ramblings

by Bill Noyes

N.C.L.T (Non-Circulating-Legal-Tender): The term creates instant disgust and profound lack of interest in any serious collector of real coins, whether one is talking about the plastic wrapped gems sold by the U.S. mint or some pseudo-foreign power like the Marshall Islands. Expensive and almost always much, much cheaper in the after-market, they are sold to the novice and often sour these potential coin collectors on Numismatics as a hobby. The damage these "instant losers" create in the minds of the public is huge.

The profits for the mints and private companies involved are considerable, and these profits allow them to cater to the cataloguers who include them as "real" coins: The numismatic advertisers who promote their products in splashy full color, full page ads and the ANA and other bourses who allow them to sell to a trusting public who is fooled by the slick booths and endorsement of the ANA or other organizers. Even worse than these pseudo-coins are the various medals and medalets with or without some small "bullion value" depicting some popular theme like Lady Diana – dead or alive – or breeds of cats or WWII airplanes. Do not misunderstand me; there is nothing wrong or silly about collecting medals or medalets with space flights or ships or some such, but you must be clear that you are collecting medals and medalets, that you are not collecting coins and that the value structure and the desirability and consequently resale value falls under exonomia, not "real" coins. In between these "real circulating coins," medals, and medalets fall tokens – issued and maybe guaranteed by private individuals. "Real tokens" actually circulated alongside or in place of real coins, usually as a convenience or necessity in remote areas or in times of acute shortages of "real coins." Tokens have been used for many centuries in numbers and for durations dictated by economic necessity; NCLT has been around for centuries but has proliferated since the end of the silver era in 1963; and medals and medalets have been around for centuries, usually struck to commemorate some great personage or event in history like Abraham Lincoln or the sinking of the Lusitania.

What, you might rightly ask, has all this tokens, medals, and NCLT business got to do with "Conder Tokens?" Actually, quite a bit because no series in history has such an undefined

mixture of “real tokens,” pseudo-tokens, medals, medalets, and other numismatic ephemera than the issues lumped under “Conder tokens” by Dalton and Hamer. Having bought my first “Conder token” from Randolph Zander in 1956 and having upwards of 800 pieces encompassing every category above, I am surprised that the present influx of collectors knows so little about what they are buying as “Conder tokens.” Maybe I’m naïve to think that today’s collectors are going to bother to learn anything about what they are buying beyond a perception of value and grade, but I hope that the collector who buys “Conder tokens” has stepped beyond the “slabbed Morgan dollars” and Full-Bell-Lines Franklin halves and maybe even the MS68 type coins mentality or lack thereof and has arrived at collecting “Conder tokens” after studying the series literature and at least has formed a vague idea of what pieces he wants to collect within the series – not even the Bobbes aspire to all 5000+ listed by D&H. I suspect many, if not all, of the “new” Conder collectors just buy what appeals to them and in whatever grade (unfortunately many require the MS65 red as a residual of some past numismatic brainwashing) they can afford. These “appeal” buyers can rapidly acquire 400-500 without ever exceeding \$50 each, even in nice UNC, but they will never acquire any of the most sought after pieces. To truly collect “Conder tokens,” a collector must break down the 5000+ D&H pieces into attainable groups.

R.C. Bell attempted to do this in the 1960s with varying degrees of success, but unfortunately, his books are out of print and quite hard to find. The point of all this is that there are “Conder tokens” and there are “Conder tokens,” and before a new collector takes out his wallet to buy a shiny new piece, they need to know what type of “Conder Token” they are buying because various types are more appealing, and unfortunately with more appeal goes the old numismatic problem child: More Value. Although this is a huge overstatement, “real tokens” tend to be more valuable in numismatics than tokens struck for collectors, medals and medalets, and other miscellanea. “Real tokens” are themselves usually of less value than “real coins.” The premise is that given equivalent metals and rarities, a real coin will be worth more than a real token which will be worth more than a real medal and NCLT coins; tokens and medals will almost always be worth less than their coin counterparts. As I said, this is an oversimplification but will serve the novice collector well as he tries to make sense out of the 5000+ D&H varieties. I cannot recommend more highly R.C. Bell’s *Commercial Coins: 1787-1804*¹. Not counting the Scottish issues of Farthing size in the end of D&H, Bell has identified most of the “real Conder tokens” – these are the necessity pieces that circulated alongside real coins or in place of them. An astute student can quibble with a few Bell included and argue about several omissions, but the 250+ listed by Bell are a sane and logical group for the new collector to start with. This group meets all the criteria for forming a “collection” – first, a finite, identifiable number that is neither so small that they are easily obtained nor so large as to be impossible; second, you can collect them in VF to UNC with ease, so the size of your “coin funds” is of little importance; third, the variety is extensive, from very attractive on both obverse and reverse to very boring with almost no duplication; fourth, they are all “real tokens,” thus on the top of the value chart for the entire series and yet most are “common,” so the cost factor may be much less, but like all “real” tokens, they can be very elusive if not impossible to find in top grades, unlike most of the

¹ As an aside, the Conder Token Club could do worse than get Bell’s permission to sell some Xerox copies as a pseudo-fund raiser new collector helper project

rest of the “so called Conder tokens” which almost always come in top grades²; finally and most importantly, it will be a long term, challenging goal to form a collection of all 250+ “real tokens” in similar grade. You may be able to send a bunch of money to any major dealer and get back most of the pieces, but you’ll have a lot of brown XFs and very few choice UNC’s in the 200+ you receive. Buying a few at a time at fair prices will be a long term challenge. Another very important offshoot of limiting your collecting to “real Conder tokens” is the collector will avoid the trap of buying many flashy but undesirable pieces that are not tokens but medalets or some such and thus valued by astute collectors at less than “real tokens” in equivalent grade. Many of the most attractive, large size “Conders” are in reality low mintage medals struck specifically for “collectors.” These “non-token Conders” are certainly collectable but only by someone who understands where they fit in the numismatic chart of appeal and value. The fact that many of these say “token” means absolutely nothing – the now “famous” Sawbridgeworth (\$41,900) says token but is surely no more than a high relief medal that was struck to take advantage of the “token craze” of the 1790s-early 1800s in Great Britain, and this frenzy was really the first proliferation of NCLT (and I’m using this term here a bit loosely to refer to non-circulating tokens) and medalets for the unsophisticated collector. The passage of time (200 years) does not transform a Kempson’s Gate from a medal to a real token – they were produced for sale to collectors and never intended to circulate – they were not “real” then, nor are they today.

To state the obvious, I have a great dislike for any numismatic item struck for the specific purpose of making money for direct sale to collectors with no intent to create a circulating medium – whether it be modern U.S. silver commems or Spence’s political medalets – Kempson’s buildings are no better than a set of Franklin mint ingots depicting the 50 U.S. state birds. I have no such contempt for real medals, such as the Middlesex political series that usually commemorates some historical personage or event, but the collector must understand that he is buying/collecting medals, not coins or tokens. It is no wonder that new Conder collectors so frequently ask me how to tell what to pay for specific pieces. The entire series is a dealer’s dream – flashy pieces can be bought cheap as can unappreciated rarities, but pricing is often liquid and arbitrary, based more on grade than anything else – only a few dealers/collectors know the “real values,” and they are not talking (if you think the Noble sale prices realized will tell you much, you are mistaken and do not understand this “event” was, bluntly put, a well-attended “male pissing contest” the likes of which token collecting may never see again). What the “Conder series” needs desperately is a well-organized, well thought out, new book which makes sense out of the mish-mash of pieces included in D&H. This book should be written by the Bobbes and it is time we all convinced Jerry to stop “fiddling around” and create something of lasting value – with Sharon to control his excessive zeal – it would be a work for the next 100 years like D&H has been for the last. Jerry, it’s time you faced the facts; you are not getting any younger, and you will never be the next Pablo Casals or Arnold Palmer, but you and Sharon could easily be the next Dalton and Hamer.

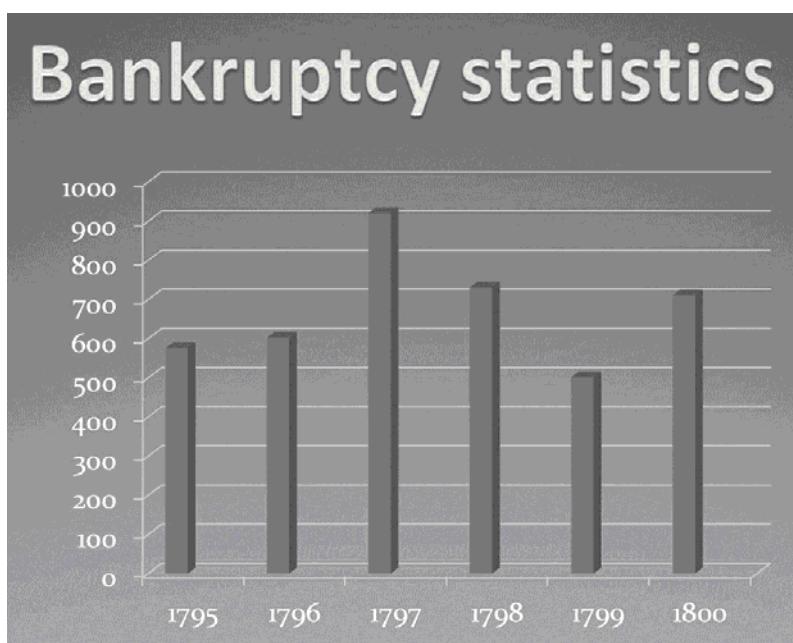
² An aside to novice collectors: never buy a “Conder token” which was struck for other than circulating reasons in less than choice UNC because that is its “normal expected grade” and its true value in XF will be deeply discounted by a knowledgeable collector

Bankruptcy in the 1790's: Token Issuers in Financial Difficulties – Part 2

by Jon D. Lusk

See Issue #66 for Part 1

There were a number of hurdles in the way of a creditor, the highest one for most would have been the £200 bond that needed to be posted. These impediments probably caused bankruptcy to be infrequent in the 1790's.



A rough rate of bankruptcy during this period would be .033 percent per year. (658 yearly average divided by roughly 2 million families.) Today in England, however, there is about .6% frequency of family bankruptcies annually. That is about 20 times higher than the 1790's. (The US is almost twice as high at around 1%.) The most astounding number to emerge from this is that at the .033 percent rate one would expect about 1.5% of a given population to go bankrupt during their working life in the 1790's. However, over the population of token issuers, I encountered greater than 10% were placed into bankruptcy! Almost seven times the expected number. One wonders if there was a connection between token issuing and business failure?

I covered through Middlesex in Part 1, here I'll continue, starting with Norfolk.



Thomas Ashley Norfolk 5, shopkeeper in Aylsham – 1820 declared bankrupt



William Glover Somerset 32-34, bookseller and printer in Bath – 1799 declared bankrupt



Frances Heath Somerset 39, ironmonger in Bath – 1800 bankruptcy, paid off by 1803



Hawkins Bird Somerset 88, 89, grocer and tea dealer in Bath – 1800 bankruptcy, with an 1804 release



James Niblock & William Hunter Somerset 99-103, auctioneers in Bristol. However their 1790 bankruptcy was while they were in business as woolen/linen drapers in Liverpool.



Matthias Abel Suffolk 21, a grocer, draper, and banker in Bungay – by 1815 he was declared bankrupt



Michael Apsey Suffolk 28, Bury ironmonger, tinman and brazier – 1797 bankruptcy that took eight years to resolve



Thomas Dally (the son in Dally & Son) Sussex 15, 16, Chichester linen draper –1807 bankruptcy



Thomas Chaldecott Sussex 19, 20, – silversmith in Chichester who had a bankruptcy sale of all he owned in 1806



Frederick George Fisher Sussex 21, bookseller and stationer in Eastbourne and Brighton – bankruptcy in 1803 and later becomes a house agent in London.



Richard Paley Yorks 43-51, a malster and chandler in Leeds and later a housing developer – was declared bankrupt in 1803. Narrowly avoided criminal charges during proceedings.



John Pilmer Angus 17, a Dundee grocer – declared bankrupt in 1807



James Bisset Angus 28, a flax spinner in Montrose – was declared bankrupt in 1797 and 1816



Andrew Leslie Lothian 6-8, a nurseyman in Edinburgh – his company was declared bankrupt in 1791.



John Howard Kyan various between Dublin 29 and 304, a Dublin merchant – declared bankrupt, probably after his death in 1801



William Binns Dublin 347-350, a Dublin ironmonger – was declared bankrupt in 1815

I would like to give a special mention to James Niblock, as far as I'm concerned the king of the bankrupts. While you may have noticed that some of the issuers managed to find themselves in bankruptcy twice, Mr. Niblock took bankruptcy to unheard of levels, five times that I have found, with four different partners, in three cities. His bankruptcy trail started in Liverpool with Richard Cook in 1790 and then with William Hunter in 1791. The last pair then moved to Bristol and after their flirtation with the auction business and token issuing, Niblock paired up George Burgess and they went bankrupt in 1800. Next he joined with Richard Stanley Latham and they went bankrupt in 1816, still in Bristol. That partnership then moved to Bath where they again went bankrupt in 1821. In all cases, all participants were listed as either linen, woollen, or just plain drapers.

* * * * *

Notice of Annual Meeting

At

Chicago ANA

Thursday August 7, 2014 at 6:00pm

Room 40

Please join us for dinner out after meeting

“BIS” Demystified

by Bill McKivor

Though not a scholar in Latin, use of D&H has certainly led me to attempt to translate a number of Latin words. Not the least among them is the term “*bis*” used by D&H to denote a “new” token that was linked to a previous one. Though it is obvious what it is intended to mean in the book—an additional piece---why it was used has been a mystery. Let’s look at what they have done. A token is given a number. Any new edge that uses the same dies is listed as a, b, c, &c. However, if the dies are not the same, sometimes it is listed as “*bis*”. There are a number of types of “*bis*” tokens.

Some of them are a bit like Hertfordshire 4, *bis* I and *bis* II. The *bis* tokens here are simply small changes in the reverse die, *bis* I having the mountain closer to the foot of “f”, and *bis* II having no period after the date. Other than that the token looks nearly the same. There are quite a few like this in the book, with just minor changes to one die or another.



Hertfordshire 4*bis* I
Image by Bill McKivor

Another type of token using *bis* is one where a single die is the same as the token numbered, but the reverse (or obverse) is different. An Example here is Middlesex 181, where there is another piece, Middlesex 181*bis*, with the same portrait of George III but a reverse that says “Frogmore”. There is also a piece that has the Frogmore reverse but has an obverse portrait of Queen Charlotte. These two pieces would be called *bis* I and *bis* II. This latter piece is not in D&H, but should be. Now it gets really interesting, as there is another piece with the Middlesex 180 reverse, but with the Middlesex 181*bis*II obverse, that is listed currently in Davisson’s update as Midd 180*bis*--- A look in D&H tells us that Middlesex 180 and 181 have the same reverse, so this piece could be listed easily as Midd 181*bis* III as it shares dies with items added to each number. Confused?



Middlesex 181*bis* I
Image by Bill McKivor



Middlesex 180*bis* (or 181*bis* III)
Image by Bill McKivor



Middlesex 181*bis* II (not listed at this time).
Image by Bill McKivor

Continued on page 21

The 50 Dies of Thomas Spence

Harry E. Salyards

I must begin with a confession: With my devotion to the “radicals” who provided the philosophic underpinnings for the American Revolution, I was drawn early on in my token collecting to the productions of Thomas Spence. But the more deeply I pursued that collection, the more I was forced to conclude that Dalton & Hamer’s listing of Spence tokens is a mess—a total jumbling of Spence and Anti-Spence sentiments, plus dies erroneous and irrelevant. Middlesex 827-838 first caught my attention; how do you pair yourself with Thomas Paine in admiration on one die (e.g., Middlesex 677), and then turn around and hang him on a gallows in the run of “End of Pain” tokens? Jim Wahl, in an early issue of the *Journal* (#10, December 15, 1998) offered an explanation: “The End of Pain series is included in the Spence tokens, although mostly made by Skidmore.” OK, that sounds plausible. But what about Middlesex 760, with its jolly fat Englishman and bone-gnawing Frenchman? That surely qualifies as another ‘anti-Spence Spence.’ And what about “Pandora’s Breeches”? (e.g., Middlesex 688) And that seemingly-irrelevant Snail? (e.g., Middlesex 714).

Into that mess strode R. H. Thompson, in a detailed and scholarly article, “The Dies of Thomas Spence (1750-1814),” in the *British Numismatic Journal*, 1969. His elegant research method was to search for the first notice in print of the various token designs, in the contemporary catalogs by Birchall, Denton, or Spence himself, keeping in mind the time frame in which Spence was known to have been in the token business: from his release from prison near the end of 1794, until his ‘bankruptcy’ in the winter of 1796-7. He suggests that there are 56 dies attributable to Spence (29 obverses and 27 reverses), 49 of which were published by May 1796. I don’t own the Birchall or Spence catalogs, but I do own a Denton (*Virtuoso’s Companion*). Going through those engravings plate by plate, I discovered that Denton published engravings of 20 of these dies, in various pairings, between November 24, 1795 and May 19, 1796. Eight of these were the first documentation in print—as was the ‘legendless’ die stage of the George Gordon obverse:

November 24, 1795: Slop Seller / Coaly Tyne (Northumberland 3)

February 4, 1796: George Gordon bust [no legend] / “Lord George Gordon 1780” (Midd^x 782)

March 3, 1796: True Hearted Sailor / Crowned Anchor with Hearts (Middlesex 857)

May 9, 1796: George Gordon with legend / Sessions House Old Baily (Middlesex 780)

May 19, 1796: True Hearted Sailor / Marine Society Boy (Middlesex 783)

One more obvious Spence die—the “Little Turnstile”—was published by Denton on July 21, 1796, paired with a Druid’s Head (Obverse “Z” in Thompson’s terminology). But while this Druid-head die is distinctive among the halfpence, with a very thin, ‘open’ wreath and a wide, flat, slightly concave ribbon bow, I can’t believe it was ever conceived as a Spence die. First and foremost, it lacks any philosophic connection with “Spence’s Glorious Plan.” As D. W. Dykes has noted (*Conder Token Collector’s Journal* #54, 2010, p. 31), “By early 1796. . .Skidmore was interchanging dies extensively. . .Clearly [some Spence] dies were already in his hands, although he is not supposed to have acquired formal ownership until [1797]. . .none of Skidmore’s mules

exhibited the purpose or wry wit of [Spence's] bizarre extravaganza; they were simply a 'jobbing' enterprise to gull collectors through the creation of freak—and costly—varieties."

I regard the Druid / Turnstile pairing as one such freak, and would remove the Druid from the Spence die list. That leaves 55.

After July of 1796, no more Spence dies appeared in the serial publications by Denton or his successor Prattent until after May 13, 1797. (Denton had completed his run of thrice-monthly publications with the plates of February 11, 1797. He even included an Index and a "FINIS" after his "Volume 6.") Prattent picked up the mantle with weekly publication of paired obverse and reverse engravings of 12 tokens per installment, beginning on April 22, 1797. After May 13, the plates are simply dated "1797," but if one counts forward through the plates that complete the series ("Volume 7" and "Volume 8"), it is clear that the series was finally completed on September 2. Those plates include a number of conclusive Spence dies from 'The Handbill,' that broadside headlined "NEW COINS / PUBLISHED AND SOLD / BY T. SPENCE / DEALER IN COINS / (No. 8,) / LITTLE TURNSTILE, HIGH HOLBORN," known from the single copy bound at the end of an issue of Spence's catalog of tokens, in the Goldsmiths' Library in the University of London. Thompson reprints this on page 135. Included are 20 obverses and 20 reverses (one of which, the Cat, is known in two different die varieties). Though these designs had previously been described in print, mostly by Birchall, these were the first engraved illustrations:

[July 29] 1797: End of Oppression / Beginning of Oppression (Middlesex 814)

[July 29] 1797: End of Oppression / 3 Thomases (Middlesex 818)

[July 29] 1797: Indian / Double-Loaded Ass (Middlesex 719)

[July 29] 1797: Spence Head / We Are Also the People (Middlesex 691)

[July 29] 1797: Freeborn Englishman / Double-Loaded Ass (Middlesex 718)

[Sept. 2] 1797: Before the Revolution / Cat ("My Liberty. . .") (Middlesex 850)

In the course of his work, Thompson also offers solid evidence against a number of those "Spence" dies, per Dalton and Hamer, that I had had trouble believing. It seems that the End of Pain / Pandora's Breeches die (Middlesex 829) was in existence by 1792-3, long before Spence's involvement in token making. The die showing "bombs a-throwing into a besieged place," as Spence himself put it in his 1795 pamphlet, really pairs with the "Brighton" obverse (D & H Suffolk 6), and is not the die identified as the Bastille by D & H (Middlesex 692); instead, Spence's "Bastile" [sic], as 'The Handbill' puts it, is "Before the Revolution" (Middlesex 790). Thompson discovered a precise description of a typical cell in that prison, in Spence's own publication *Pig's Meat*, quoted from an observer inside the Bastille after its fall: "the great stone in the middle of each [dungeon], which served the double purpose of a bed and a chair; the chain in the middle of the stone." He also argues convincingly that the die Spence simply calls "an anchor" in 'The Handbill' is in fact the Crowned Anchor with Hearts (Middlesex 705), this in commemoration of the Crown and Anchor Tavern in the Strand, site of a dinner hosted by the Whig Club on February 4, 1795, to celebrate the acquittal of Hardy, Thelwall, and Horne Tooke. In one notable case, he refuses to accept a pair of dies which Charles Sheplard, writing in the

Gentleman's Magazine (March, 1798, page 213) had attributed to Spence, citing “insufficient evidence.” This is the Minerva / Liberty Cap token (Middlesex 514), which indeed looks like it *should* be a Spence. But that refusal leads, in turn, to the problem I have with another five dies which Thompson *did* accept as Spence's.

Remember, all the evidence suggests that Spence's involvement in token making was confined to 1795-6. Looking again at *The Virtuoso's Companion*, 34 of Thompson's Spence dies (omitting the Druid), including 28 of 41 from ‘The Handbill’—allowing for both Cat dies—were published as engravings by either Denton or Prattent between November, 1795 and September, 1797, but none of the five ‘figural’ dies that round out Thompson's die listings:

Obverse AA: Westminster Scholar
Obverse BB: The Habit of a Spaniard
Obverse CC: The Habit of a Turk
Reverse Z: Blue Coat Boy
Reverse AA: Bridewell Boy

These five dies were not described until 1798, either—three by Conder, and two—the Spaniard and Turk—by Sheplard, once again in the *Gentleman's Magazine* (January 1798, page 13). “Sheplard believed this to be Spence's,” is all Thompson has to say. Why accept these two and reject the Minerva / Liberty Cap? The evidence for all three seems equally slim—when we remember how long after Spence ceased token production this was. If these were really in existence by late summer 1797, it seems strange that at least a couple of them weren't engraved for publication. It is also interesting to explore what *was* being published during that 12-month hiatus between July 1796 and July 1797, so devoid of “Spence” dies, as has been noted. First and foremost, lots of Skidmore's! One notes a tendency of those church-and-gate tokens with the “PSC” monogram, attributed to Paul Skidmore, to appear in bunches: eight of these were published between their first appearance on April 28, 1796 and June 30 of that year—then followed a seven-month hiatus, before another 11 of them appeared, between January 28 and February 11, 1797—then another 11 between May 27 and July 29, followed by a final seven on August 19. Put another way, this makes 30 “PSC” tokens to three “Spence's” between April of '96 and late July of '97, before a final burst of each—but none of Thompson's last five ‘figurals.’ Though Denton, and subsequently Prattent, still had to pick and choose among the glut of 130 such “PSC” designs produced during 1796-7, they nonetheless managed to publish over a quarter of them. Given this assiduousness in documenting the 1797 output of Skidmore's coining operation—assuming that by 1797, Skidmore owned all the “Spence” dies ‘free and clear’—it seems strange that *not one* of these five ‘figural’ dies found its way to publication by those last plates of September 2, 1797. I will grant that these dies are stylistically similar to the True Hearted Sailor / Marine Society Boy (Middlesex 783)—but stylistic similarity does not prove common origin. There's also the issue of subject matter. Spence grew up a poor dockside kid. Sailors and sailor boys were part of his natural milieu. Westminster Scholars, Spaniards, and Turks?—not so much. Bridewell Boys (homeless) or Blue Coat Boys (foundlings) seem a little more in character—but we are nonetheless left with the fact that none of these dies were described prior to 1798. Accordingly, I must conclude that, just like the Minerva / Liberty Cap

token, they belong to the ‘Last Hurrah’ of token coinage, in late 1797—and therefore *not* to Thomas Spence.

In short, I believe there are not 56 Spence dies, but 50:

- 2 for “Spence’s Glorious Plan”
- 41 noted on ‘The Handbill’ (including both Cat dies)
- 2 “T. Spence Bookseller” dies
- 2 “Lord George Gordon” dies
- 1 “True Hearted Sailor” die
- 1 “Marine Society Boy”: die
- 1 “Little Turnstile” die

To these, the Spence collector by die variety would surely want to add the earlier die stage of the Gordon obverse (Thompson’s Obverse W), its lack of any legend being quite distinctive.

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Dalton & Hamer

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Author’s Note: In discussing the George Gordon obverse die, I use the terminology “die stage” to emphasize a die deliberately altered by its engraver, as opposed to “die state,” the progressive wear and deterioration of a die from striking a succession of coins or tokens.

* * * * *

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“BIS” Demystified

(Continued from page 16)

The next type of *bis* token is one where neither the obverse or reverse die is the same, though the idea is much the same as the first piece. Middlesex 213 is like that---A National token with the bust of Pitt as #212, and the reverse of #211. Middlesex 213*bis* I has an entirely different bust of Pitt, and a completely different reverse. Middlesex 213*bis* II has a third bust of Pitt, and the same reverse as 213*bis* I. Neither is mentioned in the body of the work, one must look in the addenda to find them. Looking at the three Middlesex 213's there are thus three obverses and two reverses.



Middlesex 213*bis* 1
Image by Cheapside Tokens

Dalton and Hamer found themselves in this position a number of times. Middlesex 1052 is a halfpenny. It features the bust of George Washington facing right, and the shield of the United States on the reverse. Since Middlesex 1053 is a farthing, any new halfpennies would have to be included at 1052 or before, and they found one---With the bust of Washington facing left this time, and a crowned harp on the reverse with the legend “North Wales”. Having no number to use, they called it Middlesex 1052*bis*. Neither die on the latter piece are anything like the pair used on the 1052. However, there was no way around the situation-- it must go after 1052 if it was to be included at all.

Another example of this confusion would be the Preston Artist repository token, with the name of the issuer and the date, 1794. It is not in D&H, but Richard Dalton mentioned it with a full description, and indicated that it really belonged as there were other pieces like it that were allowed.

Thus, the Preston piece, as pictured, would have to follow Lancashire #4, as it is a penny token and #5 is a halfpenny. The Preston token would have to be 4*bis*. It is obvious that the Preston piece has absolutely nothing to do with the Lancashire bridge token--- but there is no other place for it.



Preston Artist Token
Image by Bill McKivor

It becomes obvious that something is not right here. It is intuitive to understand that *bis* was used to tack on to another piece one that had not yet been listed. That is why *bis* was needed, but it certainly seems clumsy, and many ask “what does it mean”?

In 2005, Paul and Bente Withers, in their yearly volume of *Sacre Moneta*, printed a book review of the 2004 edition of Dalton and Hamer as written by John Whitmore. In it he gives the best explanation in the fewest words that I have seen. I am going to quote him here, with a bit of editing--

(In reference to D&H)---“Over a period of eight years thirteen main parts were published, each with its own introduction. Dalton and Hamer gave each token a distinct die combination a number, with a following letter used only to distinguish edge varieties. They left no break in the numbering system, thus leading to a problem. When the need arose to insert a newly discovered die combination between two existing numbers, (or even a completely new token, as happened)--the word “*bis*” the Latin for twice, was rather clumsily added to the first number. If further insertions became necessary, it would seem that the Latin “*TER*”, (Three), or “*QUADRIENS*”, (Four) could have been used, but these were ignored in favor of *bis* I, *bis* II, *bis* III, etc.”

Some of these are listed in the body of the work as they were discovered before printing occurred. Many more were listed in a fourteenth part, the “addenda and corrigenda”. Thus the reader of D&H must look to that for additional listings. As time went by, many more additions, corrections, and even new finds were noted. In 1990, again in 1996, and in 2004 updates were given with a vastly expanded addenda section or sections. In 2006, John Whitmore brought them all together in his new book, “A Token Collector’s Companion”.

“*Bis*” was certainly not the optimum way of adding new finds. It would have been far better if some space had been left between numbers, as the Withers did with their book on 19th C tokens. A find could have therefore been given a new, unused number that fit the situation. The fact that they did not leave this spacing created the need for some sort of way of adding a new find, and

“bis” was their solution, most likely one they did not consider to be a very good answer to the problem.

They most likely realized this somewhere during the eight year span used to write, produce, and market the book, section by section---but by the time they did realize it, it was too late. With the printing of most of the sections accomplished, “bis” became their solution.

We know it as an indicator that there is a token or die that had not come to their attention when writing the book, and used to insert the additional piece. It is my theory, however, that it was to them simply a way of getting themselves out of the numismatic corner into which they found themselves painted.

* * * * *

Bis in Real Life

by Jon D. Lusk

Imagine my surprise while I was on a French Caribbean island and I discovered a map of a shopping center that used bis!



It was used for buildings labeled 15 bis, 25 bis, as well as 19 bis and 19 Ter. It is interesting to note that Ter (meaning three) is capitalized but bis is not. I guess when a new building was constructed they resisted renumbering and just added a suffix.

New Dies Discovered for an Old Favourite?

David Stuart & Peter Petrovskiy

Earlier this year I received an email from Peter Petrovskiy who is a coin dealer with thirty years experience based in Moscow. He has travelled the world the last twenty years purchasing coins for customers, other dealers and his own collection. Peter asked me to look at a token which he felt was unrecorded. The result appears to point to a previously unknown pair of dies associated with the common Samuel Kingdon Exeter Halfpenny of 1792, D&H Devon 2. This new example is certainly of superior workmanship to the standard token, with finer engraving and subtle, but clear differences, some of which I illustrate below.

Weight 9.15g – Diameter 30.5mm

Obverse



D&H Devon 2



New Die

Vertical band on mitre and no jewels on horizontal band, with stronger peripheral pellets. Start and end of legend closer to robe. Wool comb points to second limb of "A". Style of hair and beard different and folds in robe better defined.

Reverse



D&H Devon 2



New Die

Top of legend is closer to denticles. The ends of the sword and sceptre are more intricate. Lion's tail is different as are the tails and manes on both Pegasus' whilst their ears are larger. The leg of the right Pegasus is closer to the shield. The castle on the central shield is much neater and exhibits a more acute angle at its base. There is a narrower gap between "SE" on "SEMPER" in the banner. Date numerals are stronger, closer to the denticles, and a line continued from the shield cuts the "9".

Edge



The edge is plain but in places appears to indicate evidence of filing, possibly to remove a pre-existing edge inscription prior to the token being struck. There seems little point in doing this afterwards to make the token more rare than it already is.¹

Provenance

Peter bought this, and another two Russian tokens at an antique market but was not able to obtain from the seller the name of the old collector who had died and whose collection was being broken up. During those days in the Soviet Union many collectors kept their collections secret.

Summary

The more one compares the two tokens; the more subtle differences can be found which point to this specimen having been produced from a pair previously unknown dies. However, the original being a very common token, it may be that we have taken it for granted and a further examination of available tokens may uncover more examples.¹

R. C. Bell² mentions that “J. Westwood, Jnr., issued some Exeter “Half-Pence” for sale to collectors”, of which this may be the first specimen to come to light.



David Stuart: ABC Coins and Tokens, Alnwick, Northumberland, UK. Peter Petrovskiy: Coin Dealer, Moscow.
May 2014

References:

¹ Gary Sriro – Private communication (18th February 2014)

² R. C. Bell – “Commercial Coins 1787-1804”.

Seeking the Issuers of the Hampshire 58

by Jon D. Lusk



The issuers of the Hampshire 58 are proclaimed on the edge as G. Robinson, J. Mooney, and J. Carter. Why is this token any more difficult than the hundreds of others? One would think it is more difficult because previous authors have not expanded on what the issuers did or what their first names might be. The main authors, Samuel, Bell, Dykes, and this Journal, have offered no facts or guesses on who the issuers might have been.

As most readers of this Journal know, I have spent the last seven years filling in this type of information on issuers of the commercial tokens in the D&H series. I struggled for years to make some sense of the various small bits of information I had gathered on the Hamps 58 issuers. I now feel comfortable in assigning this token, with two of the three names having a high certainty of being properly matched.

Let me start first with J. Carter, a moderately common last name matched with a very common first initial. I would like to use an approach that is common in mathematics (but not so much in the everyday world) and that is “Proof by Contradiction”. Simply put, one makes an assumption and then draws logical conclusions based upon the correctness of the assumption. If those conclusions turn out to be false, then the initial assumption is false.

Using “Proof by Contradiction”, let me assume that the issuer of the Hamps 58 token was not John Carter. Specifically, Sir John Carter, nine times mayor of Portsmouth, including during the first nine months of 1797, the date on the token. Sir John was also Knighted by King George III in 1773 and High Sheriff of Hampshire in 1784. This means that some other J. Carter was the issuer and didn’t bother to put a distinguishing product or specific location within Portsmouth that would differentiate him from Sir John because he was sure that the world would come to the firm of Robinson, Mooney, and Carter to redeem their tokens, wherever they might have been located in Portsmouth. By the way, this firm has not been found by any of the researchers who

have tried, even with the fabulous electronic databases available today. J. Carter, the issuer, didn't seem to be concerned that he would irritate Sir John, one of the most powerful men in town. A quote from one author, offering his opinion of the Carters of Portsmouth¹ - "*Their domination of Portsmouth through family influence must have been a record of its kind*". Let me also eliminate Sir John's father and son, both named John as well, because his father died in 1794 and his only son was born in 1788. Thus, it really doesn't make sense that this token, with its display of the Arms of Portsmouth and the symbol of Hope would have been issued by a J. Carter who wasn't the mayor of the town.

Sir John Carter (1741-1808) managed Pike's brewery and was also a pub operator. He married Dorothy Cuthbert and they had five daughters and one son. He played a significant role in saving the life of Admiral Colpoys as well as calming an explosive situation during the Spithead Mutiny. Without his involvement there could have been a bad ending to the mutiny, which might also have resulted in the collapse of the Kingdom. Quoting from my upcoming book, *British and Irish Tradesmen and their Copper Tokens of 1787-1804*:



The Spithead Mutiny started on April 16, 1797, in the middle of Sir John's tenure as mayor and lasted until May 15th. The British had been at war with France for four years and the ranks of sailors had swelled to meet the challenge of bottling up the French fleets in their ports. Poor officers, poor pay, long hours, and many months at sea had taken their toll. In a well-coordinated effort, the mutineers seized control of 16 ships in the Channel Fleet that were anchored near Portsmouth, at a place known as Spithead, and presented their demands. It was a misunderstanding during the negotiations that led to the deaths of three of the sailors, shot by marines where the talks were being held. Admiral Colpoys was "arrested" by the mutineers and threatened with hanging. The sailors demanded the right to bury their dead in a public funeral in the town. The Navy refused and trained the town guns on the fleet. Sir John stepped in and was able to convince the Navy that the funeral could be held peaceably, and the mutineers trusted his word as to their safety while on land. He arranged the release of the Admiral and the continuation of negotiations. The mutiny ended primarily because the Navy listened to the reasonable demands of the sailors and met them. Sir John's intercession help avoid a disaster, for if the Channel fleet had disintegrated because of the situation and France had been able to mount a credible invasion of England because of it, the world might be quite different today.

I think that the choice of the date on the token, 1797, and the town motif fit in nicely with the trauma that the town must have felt during the month long mutiny and offers a segue into the next issuer.

Mooney is an unusual name. The highest concentration in the 1891 census was in Lancashire, with slightly lower numbers in Yorkshire. Some counties had zero in that census. Based on the 2002 census name frequency one would expect that there were about four people in Hampshire

¹ *In a Liberal Tradition: A Social Biography 1700-1950*, by Victor Bonham-Carter, Constable: London, 1960

with the last name of Mooney at the time the token was issued. I found one Mooney male in Hampshire during the token time and he lived in Portsmouth and his first initial was J.

In 1797, John Mooney (1750-1833) was a seaman, land based in Portsmouth in the quartermaster core, and in 1798 received one of the few promotions to officer from within the ranks. He married Ann Powell in 1784. He was reassigned from the Portsmouth area in 1803 and an auction of his household goods was held. (See the auction announcement at the end of this article.) After retirement from the navy he returned to the Portsmouth area, Warblington about eight miles from Portsmouth, and became a cornfactor and seedman. An item in a newspaper would suggest that this had happened by 1812. He was buried in Warblington on August 9, 1833.

For a long while I sought some connection between Mooney and Carter, other than the possibility that Mooney had been helpful during the trying times in 1797. Recently I came upon an interesting item, it seems that the First Lord of the Admiralty had written to Sir John asking him to suggest seamen that he felt should be promoted to officer. During this period in history, promoting from the ranks was a highly unusual thing to do, but the First Lord felt that appointments based on birth was a poor way to run a Navy. Coincidental, perhaps, but it strengthened my feelings that I had found a good match.

G. Robinson turned up two, or three, possible candidates. In 1797, there was a solicitor by this name, just the initial G was given. There was also a seaman named George Robinson who was notable enough to have his death reported in the local paper. That's all I know. So, find the letter that answers the First Lord's request for promotable seamen and just maybe there will be a Robinson and Mooney contained therein. There was a George Robinson married in Portsmouth in 1795. (Could have been either of the previous two or someone else.)



The house where Sir John Carter lived in Portsmouth. It was destroyed in a 1940 bombing raid.



The sale of Lt. Mooney's household goods. Hampshire Telegraph September 19, 1803.

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